

Panel Session based on the Journalistic Cultures Studies
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“Journalistic Cultures Studies”

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Thematic Axes of the Panel

Its diversity is manifest from individual perceptions that journalists have about some of the main dimensions studied in the analysis of the JCE project:

- Comparative studies in journalism
- Professional role of journalists
- Objectivity as an ideal and as a method within the media
- Ethical guidelines
- Professional autonomy (self / censorship)
- Trust and credibility in institutions and in journalism
- Contextual influences
- Access to information of journalists (sources)
- Changes in journalism today
- Journalism *online / offline*
- Technology and media
- Journalistic routines
- Risks of journalists and media
- Relationship between journalists, media and powers

Journalistic Cultures

The researchers of this project intend to analyse and define the journalistic cultures of different countries around the globe. We understand journalistic culture as a specific cognition of journalists about journalism. Within this, they evaluate their cultural ideas and orders, through which they create their reality, thus shaping their professional actions within the collective knowledge (Hanitzsch, 2007: 373).

Given that journalists' professional work is rooted in a culture and in common ways and attitudes which, in turn, is included in a set of guidelines and general cultural practices. The identity of journalists has been at the centre of research on journalistic culture and, for this reason, the links between the journalist, journalistic culture and cultural context must be studied. As stated Esser (2004: 155), different cultures cannot be understood as communities of homogeneous values. Rather they are hybrids that involve national traditional elements linked to other international elements, interacting with each other dynamically

Throughout the last century, it has been taken as reference Western journalistic culture, acting at all times as a model and even imitate. However, through this project, we present the contextualization of the journalistic culture of Ecuador, since the information currently practice varies from place to place, determined by the different social, political, cultural and economic environments. The multiplicity, or multipolaridad- journalism, has led us to study the so-called "intermediate journalistic cultures", defined by having distinctive features of the "Western journalistic culture". Today, more than ever, these fragmented cultures pigmented and develop the monochrome static concept based on the standardization of all international journalistic features.

Intermediate journalistic cultures

From the concept suggested by Bourdieu¹ (1984: 359) of "cultural intermediaries" and from the standpoint of Zelizer (2004: 52) speaks of journalists as an "interpretive community" based on subjective selection, we can reach a reconceptualization of the role of the media and journalists in countries where the journalistic culture differs from the concept of Western journalistic culture. Bourdieu (1984: 99-114), through his theory of social fields mentioned in the 2nd chapter in *The social space and its transformations* of his book *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* 1984, defines journalistic limits as a profession and how these intersect with other professional fields such as politics and economy. So, from the standpoint of Bourdieu (1984) and Zelizer (2004), we note that journalism in the countries in developing and with undemocratic political regimes can also create a particular media community and features that share a common set of rules.

Thus, we managed to establish a specific field of work with which to unravel the different professional identities in modern journalistic culture of these countries, defined from the concept of presentation and representation given by Bourdieu (1984). Why Zelizer (2007: 25) states that journalism is shown as an interpretative social field of the community in which it is located, with its 1 "We cannot raise the cultural practices within that culture,

strictly and ordinary sense, is associated with the culture in the anthropological sense.” A 20 own rules and speeches. A circumstance that makes journalism appears in a situation of constant negotiation and relativism with respect to different cultural perspectives. I argued so far leads us to consider three key points in the processing and analysis of journalists as part of the social media field: 1) the definition of journalists as such in their societies and in their academic studies; 2) possible definitions of journalism in these intermediate cultures, and 3) the problematic location of a unified and homogeneous organization due to media decentralization. In conclusion we note that to understand the intermediate journalistic cultures- which differ from the standardized concept of Western journalistic culture-, it is necessary: 1º. Define journalists as symbolic producers, able to conceptualize, build and convey the meanings of cultural forms; but also to articulate and disseminate ideologies that identify a nation. 2º underscore the symbolic importance of these managers because these countries (postcolonial, on process of development or under undemocratic regimes) are the major producers of strategic meanings ordering reality (Mahon, 2000).

Although sometimes, as it has been mentioned as ratifies Zelizer (2007: 21), often it takes Western journalistic culture (dominated by the Anglo-American variant) as an example or as standard, currently there are numerous distinctive journalistic practices along worldwide, determined by the contexts in which they are located, as well as for its social features, political, economic and cultural. Today, there are common and distinguishing features that define the various forms of practicing journalism worldwide. These singularities are what lead us to try to clarify the distinctive and common features of journalistic culture in different regions of the globe.

Comparative perspective in the analysis of journalism

Media culture has been explicitly theorised as a unit for comparative research (Hepp & Couldry, 2012) because it helps to broaden the perspective and to address a range of questions that cannot be answered in the context of single-country studies (Voltmer, 2008).

Comparative research in communication and media studies is conventionally understood as contrasting different macro-level cases (e.g., world regions, countries, subnational regions, social milieux, language areas, cultural thickenings) at one or more points in time. [...] [It] differs from non-comparative work, since it attempts to reach conclusions beyond single cases and explains differences and similarities between objects of analysis against the backdrop of their contextual conditions (Esser, 2013: 115).

For these reasons, comparative media and journalistic culture researches have gained relevance in recent years (Esser & Hanitzsch, 2012). “This growing number of comparative studies indicates that journalism and journalism research no longer operate within national or cultural boundaries” (Weaver & Löffelholz, 2008: 8).

This study contrasts the universal Continental European model of Hallin & Mancini (2004), that analyses the highly politicised and literary style of the southern European journalistic model (Spain), and the moderately politicised, corporatist style of central European journalism (Switzerland) (Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Mancini, 2005; Esser & Umbricht, 2013) with the model of intermediate journalistic cultures (Oller & Barredo, 2013) of Ecuador. Hence, the model of Hallin and Mancini is criticised, since the discussion is centred on the applicability of this model to other parts of the world (Albaek et al., 2014). In the case of Ecuador, its contextual conditions and “[...] national historiographies of socialist mass cultures [...] are a necessary first step for cross-national comparative research” (Perusko & Cuvalo, 2014: 137).

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